COTTON CHATS

FROM

DRAPER COMPANY

SHIPMAN'S
COMMON-SENSE BINDER

PATENTED

JANUARY 19, 1892. APRIL 19, 1904

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ASA L. SHIPMAN'S SONS
MANUFACTURERS,
NEW YORK.

COTTON CHATS
By the Secretary of the
DRAPER COMPANY,
HOPEDALE, MASS.

No. 32. OCTOBER, 1904.

LABOR COST OF PRODUCTION.

At the meeting of the New England Cotton Manufacturers' Association at the Mount Washington Hotel, Bretton Woods, N. H., Sept. 21st, President Herbert E. Walmsley delivered an address which has excited wide interest. After referring at length to the complicated labor problem and its associate difficulties, he spoke of a matter in which we are personally interested, in the following words:

"As regards the labor cost of production, we all know that the labor cost of weaving is in the neighborhood of one-half the total labor cost in the entire process of manufacturing cotton cloth. It is necessary, therefore, and admittedly so, in our efforts which must ever and always be unremitting in legitimately bringing down the cost of manufacture, to pay the closest attention to this particular department of cost, and, in this connection, it would appear pertinent to inquire whether or not we have in New England, as a whole, taken sufficient advantage of the warp-stop motion, and of a certain wonderful, automatic, almost human, labor-saving machine, invented and built right in our midst, known as the Northrop loom. I speak plainly. Or have we permitted our Southern friends, as a whole, to get the better of us in adopting this machine more readily than we ourselves have done? I fear many of us must admit that such is the case. Nothing is more certain than that it will have to be reckoned with and of which the least observant among us must be convinced. It behooves us, therefore, to see to it that we put our houses in order with as little delay as possible, and if there are any of us whose financial condition is

such that we are unable to install this loom, we must either go to the wall or so rearrange our financial affairs so as to enable us to equip ourselves equal to the best in every particular. If ever there was a time in the history of the cotton trade when alone it was 'the survival of the fittest,' that time is right now. This phase of our inquiry, and the remedy, where remedy is called for and needed, is plainly apparent and will admit of no evasion or delay."

Such remarks as these from such an authority are truly prophetic. We have always maintained that the universal adoption of the Northrop loom was inevitable, and that its introduction would follow the same well worn path that other meritorious inventions have followed in their day. Many mill managers who are ready to recognize the necessity for its use are prevented by conditions over which they have no immediate control. For several years, students of industrial situations have made interesting comparisons to show the advantages gained by the newer Southern mills with their Northrop looms, over the older Northern mills, still using the common loom; in fact, some of the better known authorities have claimed that the success and growth of the Southern industry in recent years was mainly due to their prompt appreciation of our wonderful machine.

There is another factor, however, in the situation, deserving like comment. The Southern mills have not only adopted the Northrop loom to a wide extent, but they have also adapted their labor conditions to the new scale of production less hampered by traditions. We do not believe that the Northern mills, as a whole, that use Northrop looms, have yet attempted to secure their full efficiency. Individual mills, of course, have attained a high standard, but the majority do not allow sufficient looms per weaver, or adapt their scale of wages so as to prompt a weaver to run more looms. In introducing our new method of filling hoppers, an overseer objected to the idea, saying that his weavers kept their hoppers full now, and did not need any quicker method. This exhibit of full hoppers, so often proudly referred to, is in reality sure evidence that the weavers should be spread over more looms. The very object of a 24-bobbin hopper is to allow the loom to run for a long period without requiring attention from the weaver. The very fact that hoppers are kept full, tells plainly that the weaver is

wasting time in moving from one loom to another to put in one or two bobbins at a time. Give a weaver a proper number of looms, and they will economize their labor to its best advantage.

An investigation of the labor troubles affecting various textile sections, will easily demonstrate the fact that the mills using Northrop looms run with a less proportion of short time, stoppage, and curtailment, than their less fortunate competitors. There are strikes at times in Northrop loom mills, but such troubles occur from the attempt of the operatives to secure a share of the **profits** which the looms produce, rather than because the introduction of the Northrop loom reduces their wages. When the loom was comparatively new in the field, it was natural for mills to anticipate trouble by giving the weavers better wages for actually doing less work. With 100,000 of our looms now running, there is a larger supply of trained operatives to draw on; although, as a matter of fact, there is no special new knowledge needed by the weaver.

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TEXTILE MACHINERY AT THE WORLD'S FAIR.

A visitor at the Fair finds very little on exhibit in the line of textile machinery, as a class, although there are several looms running to exhibit certain products, and a very good exhibit of carding and spinning machinery, is entered by an English builder. We have found that the average visitor at a fair is not particularly interested in mechanism of this class, and those who might be interested have frequent opportunities for seeing the actual operation of such machines in other places. Many of those who exhibit cotton machinery show products which do not duplicate their general output; that is, machines for exhibit are highly polished or nickel plated, and painted with great care. Every possible detail of finish is perfected; and while the practical customer is not deceived into expectation that the machines which he buys are correctly imitated by the sample, the general impression is certainly misleading, especially when comparisons are instituted. When we have

exhibited our products, we have thought it more honest to show machines exactly as we should deliver them on order, but after an experience extending over some years, we have come to the conclusion that the returns from this style of advertising hardly repay the outlay.

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APPRAISAL OF VALUE.

There are several concerns now organized which make a practice of appraising the value of equipment in establishments of various kinds. One of such recently wrote us about the value of some of our looms in a mill which they had been asked to investigate. They had been told the actual price paid, but insisted that there was some mistake, for they thought that such a complicated and well made machine should certainly be worth several times the value given. We can easily understand how appearances deceived them; for it is only by employment of the most improved processes and strictest use of economy, that we are enabled to keep our prices where they are. The foreign builders who make our looms from similar patterns, invariably charge a much higher price than we do, in spite of their cheaper labor.

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COVERS FOR COTTON CHATS PAMPHLETS.

Several of our customers have wished to file their Cotton Chats for future reference, and have asked us if we could furnish something in the nature of a holder for this purpose. We have had sample of a suitable binder made, which we should be glad to furnish without cost to those desiring the same. Before placing an order, however, it will be necessary to know how many will be needed. A postal card is therefore enclosed, which need not be answered unless the binder is wanted.